

# Spectrum



Photo by Marlene Thompson

## 63rd returns from Iraq

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As a Soldier coming back from a 15 month deployment, there is only one word you really want to hear, and that word is "Dismissed!" The Soldiers from the 63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) got to hear just that on Oct. 7 after returning home from deployment.

The group of about 343 touched down at Augusta Regional Airport at about 10:30 a.m. The Soldiers were greeted by Brig. Gen. Jennifer Napper, 7th Signal Command commanding general, Joe

Capps, post deputy commander, Col. John Baker, 35th Signal Brigade commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Rudolph Johns, 35th Sig. Bde. command sergeant major as they walked off the plane. After turning in weapons, the group loaded up on buses and took the drive down Tobacco Road towards Fort Gordon for the first time in 15 months.

The welcome home ceremony took place at Gym 5 following Lt. Col. Carlos Morales, 63rd SB(E) commander and Command Sgt. Maj. Bruce Stanley, 63rd SB(E) command sergeant major, the Soldiers marched in and formed up in front of the bleachers in front of the awaiting crowd. The Families, friends, and fellow Soldiers exploded as the 63rd SB(E) entered the room. After the short reception,

Baker released the group to once again unite with their Families.

The 63rd SB(E)'s mission in Iraq was to provide strategic communications support and joint communications to command posts and forward operating bases. The 63rd SB(E) provided flawless communications support simultaneously across three divisional battle spaces which spanned 28 separate battle positions.

Being deployed is tough on any Soldier, but having support from back home makes it easier. The Family Readiness Group along with many local community sponsors provided everything from food, phone cards, and gifts for Soldiers as they fulfill their duties overseas.



Photo by Siobhan Carlile

**Students at Freedom Park Elementary School welcome the Soldiers home as they made their way home from the airport.**



Photo by Spc. William Norris

**The American Legion Riders Post 178 escorts buses back onto Fort Gordon.**



Photo by Spc. William Norris

**Soldiers from the 63rd Expeditionary Signal Battalion arrive at Bush Field in Augusta after 15 months in Iraq.**



Photo by Spc. William Norris

**After a short ceremony the Soldiers reunited with Family and friends.**

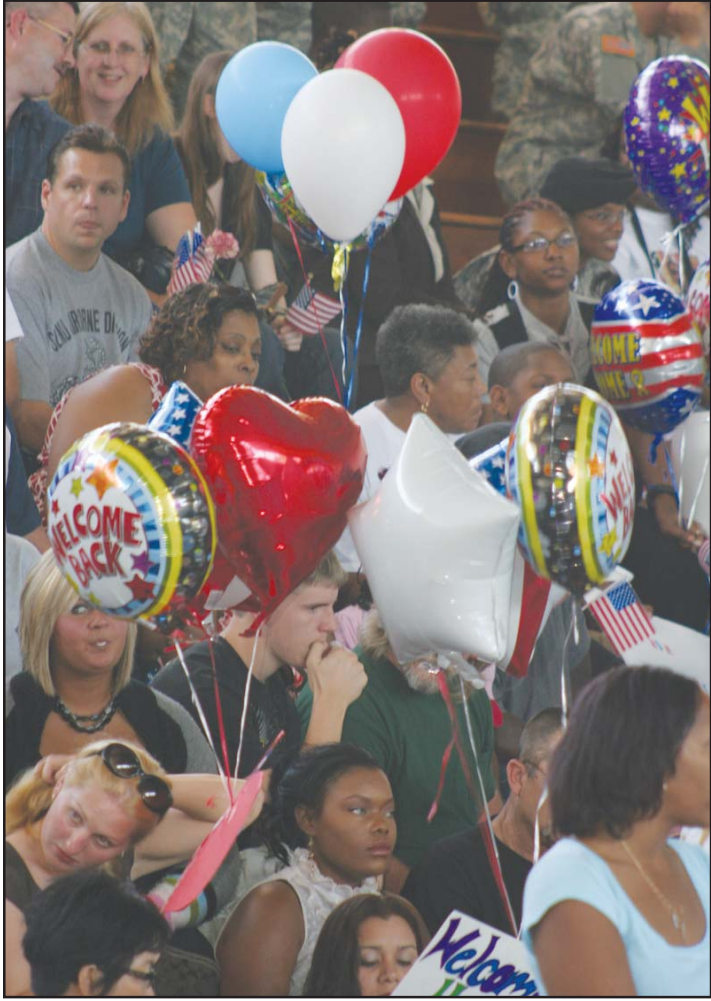


Photo by Siobhan Carlile

**The crowd of Family members can't hide their nervous energy.**



Photo by Marlene Thompson

**The sign says it all.**